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Office of the Premier

$2M FROM PROVINCE CREATES TRADES, TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS

CRANBROOK – The Province is investing $2 million to create a second Cranbrook campus for the College of the Rockies, offering trades and technology training to support local industry, Premier Gordon Campbell announced today.

"B.C.'s economy is driving intense demand for more skilled tradespeople and technology workers, and we're responding to that demand with top-notch training and more facilities," Campbell said. "This investment will support training for millwrights, planermill technicians and electricians, and is an example of the sound capital investments this government is making under our Pacific Leadership Agenda to help our public post-secondary system support B.C.'s continued growth."

The $2 million covers the purchase price of 3.92 hectares on Cranbrook's southeast boundary and includes five buildings on the site. The workshops and office buildings occupy almost 2,400 square metres, or one-sixth of the area. The college plans to use the new campus initially to house trades programs currently operating out of leased space, adding technology programs later.

"This is the sixth campus we've created in British Columbia, and it gives the College of the Rockies room to expand in the future," said Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell. "This new site, along with our expansion of the main Cranbrook campus, will open up more great places for young people in the Kootenays to train for exciting careers in trades and technology."

In the long term, the college plans to occupy all the buildings at its new campus, which is expected to open this September. In the shorter term, extra space may be leased to generate revenue.

"This property – with facilities built to a high standard, and next-to-new equipment – is providing excellent value for the college," said Bill Bennett, East Kootenay MLA. "With campuses in Creston, Fernie, Golden, Kimberley and Invermere, and now two campuses in the Cranbrook area, the College of the Rockies is well positioned to meet the region's training needs."

Since 2001, the Province has invested more than $1 billion in new facilities on campuses around the province. This includes $15.4 million to design and build an academic and trades facility expansion at the College of the Rockies main Cranbrook campus, also scheduled to open this September. The project is adding almost 5,900 square metres of shops, classrooms, nursing laboratories, administration and student study space.

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"The College of the Rockies welcomes the confidence the ministry has shown in us with this investment, as well as the expansion of our main Cranbrook campus," said Nick Rubidge, president of the College of the Rockies. "I am excited about the prospects this new facility presents. It clearly demonstrates the government's long-term commitment to trades training and post-secondary education in the East Kootenay."

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